



# OCCUPATIONAL ANALYSIS

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*An occupational analysis is a comprehensive evaluation and description of current practice. The results of the occupational analysis are used to update the description of practice and/or develop a new licensing examination.*

## **Purpose**

An occupational analysis (“job analysis”) defines practice of a profession in terms of the actual tasks that new licensees must be able to perform safely and competently at the time of licensure. In order to develop a licensing examination that is fair, job-related, and legally defensible, it must be based solidly upon what practitioners actually do on the job.

The occupational analysis should be reviewed routinely every *five to seven years* to verify that it accurately describes current practice.

## **Process**

Typically, the process begins by selecting and interviewing a sample of practitioners that accurately represent the geographic, ethnic gender, experience and practice specialty mix of the profession. During the interview, practitioners are asked to identify the tasks that they perform within major categories of work. A questionnaire based on statements of job activities is sent to a representative sample of licensed practitioners. The data are analyzed and the results are used to update the description of practice and/or develop a content outline.

## **Content outline**

The content outline specifies the tasks that a newly licensed practitioner is expected to perform and a knowledge base that should have been mastered by the time of licensure. The relative weight of each major subject area to be assessed represents the *overall* importance of that area to practice. The content outline is most commonly used to develop questions for examinations.

## **Content validation strategy**

The content validation strategy establishes job-relatedness of the examination and thereby provides empirical linkage of the examination content to the occupational analysis.

## **Entry-level perspective**

To ensure that the description of the profession represents job tasks of practitioners entering the profession, the occupational analysis always includes a number of newly licensed practitioners to provide assistance during the establishment of content and criteria to define the profession.

## **Legal standards and guidelines**

A number of statutes and guidelines, as well as case law, set standards for the licensing process in California. These include the federal Uniform Guidelines for Employee Selection Procedures, the Civil Rights Act of 1991, Section 12944 of the California Fair Employment and Housing Act, and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990.